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**THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST
BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**The Search for Security in the Middle East Between Israel and
Neighboring Countries**

by

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ABSTRACT

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This is an analysis of security issues in the Middle East. The paper supports the position that regional security is essential, and plays a pivotal role on the road to real peace between Arabs and Israelis. The paper also supports the assertion that security concerns of all parties in the Middle East should be taken into consideration. Security in the Middle East is obviously affected by military issues. Political, economic, and social issues are critical factors as well. In addition to some regional visions, from regional countries' perspectives, the paper offers information on the critical factors that may maximize regional security problems. Whatever regional countries try to do in order to meet regional security requirements, The American role in this case will be critical.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	III
THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES	1
MIDDLE EAST GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SECURITY CONCERNS	1
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THE MIDDLE EAST.....	3
AMERICAN POLICY AND INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST:.....	3
CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST	4
FACTORS AFFECTING SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST	5
SECURITY AND PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.....	6
ISRAELI SECURITY CONCERNS.....	6
EGYPTIAN SECURITY CONCERNS	8
JORDANIAN SECURITY CONCERNS.....	9
REGIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS	12
HARD SECURITY CONCERNS	12
SOFT SECURITY CONCERNS	14
ARMS CONTROL AnD REGIONAL SECURITY.....	15
ARMS COMPETITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST	16
GOALS OF ARMS CONTROL IN THE MIDDLE EAST	17
CURRENT TRENDS TO CONTROL ARMAMENT IN THE ME	18
WHAT MIGHT BE DONE?	19
<u>CONCLUSION.....</u>	20
ENDNOTES	23
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	29

THE SEARCH FOR SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Since early this decade, the Middle East region has witnessed a state of significant dynamic changes. These changes are expected to leave major impacts on shaping the political, social, and economic future of the countries in the region and to influence the intellectual structure. These changes are exhibited in the decisive strategic transformation process regarding the Arab – Israeli conflict, moving from the state of direct confrontation to the philosophy of peace and peaceful co-existence.

There is no doubt that security has been recognized as one of the main causes to the conflict over the last five decades between Israel and its Arab neighboring countries. Security concepts before the 1967 war, were varied. The existence of Israel as a state was a first priority; however, security in this case is included. Just after 1967 and 1973 wars, the United Nations resolutions 242 and 338 were issued accordingly as land for peace.¹ Security will serve as the acceptable and useful basis for the stability, prosperity, and development of societies in the region. Further more it will govern future relations in the region, politically, socially, and economically.

Security for Israel is vitally important. It is very important for neighboring countries too. Through its history, Israel used to be more aware of security issues than its Arab partners, still under the influence of the Arab-Israeli wars. Furthermore, Israeli political and security thinking is still captive to the fears of potential wars that threatens Israelis existence and expose the Israeli community to psychological violence.² On the Arab side, the aftermath of war still form vital elements in the concept of security. Therefore, hesitation, reservation, and lack of confidence are still basic aspects of the security dimension. These aspects have their impacts on the peace process and transform the security problem into a critical and dangerous equation.

MIDDLE EAST GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SECURITY CONCERNS

Although the Middle East region has different definitions from different aspects, the most important, is the security concern. The region, still relatively small, contained until the advent of this century four distinct major cultures: Arab, Persian, Turkish and Kurdish. These four cultures are all enveloped by the great Islamic civilization³. Not only are they distinct from each other in language, arts, historical experiences, customs and mores; but also each has developed within it a rich, and varied subculture all adding to the wealth of the magnificent mosaic of the area. Since the forties of this century, yet another culture, the Jewish, with yet another different background, was added⁴.

The ME / Far East as a term goes back to the beginning of the 20th century when the British foreign policy used it to describe the region located east of the Mediterranean sea. The Far East term has not been used as much as the term Middle East that was used as a geopolitical term of multi-geographical indications. This concept gained a different political and strategic dimension when Israel was created as a new political body. The term after then was connected to the concept of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in order to express the geographical dimension of the conflict. Recently, during the stage of

peace, definition of the ME gains a special functional significance related to commitments of peace such as: security measures, arms control, economic and social developments⁵.

The traditional ME concept which derives from the national geographical dimension includes all Arab countries, but excludes Israel, Turkey, Iran, and Cyprus. Most other definitions exclude North-Africa Arab countries and consider them a different region. This term has been officially used in different economic conferences held in the Arab states⁶. The Israeli concept excludes Turkey and Cyprus only; therefore the Israeli outlook includes more geographical and political area. The Israeli perspective is governed by their own security philosophy. ME definition has to meet their need of geographical coverage to all basic sources of threat, and should be a message to all parties involved to make them realize the nature of the security obligations required by them on a regional scale. Iraq and Iran are excluded in the definition of the working group on arms control and regional security in the ME due to their absence from the negotiations. By all measures, the two countries are a significant part of the region. So, their absence might be temporarily.

The United Nations has defined the ME region for the purposes of establishing a nuclear-free zone by dividing it into three parts. The first includes the core countries which means all countries mentioned in the definition of the International Atomic Energy Agency, including all Arab countries except Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Sudan in addition to Turkey and Cyprus. These excluded Arab countries are considered as another sub-region⁷. The third part is the neighboring countries that share borders with the countries in the region such as Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Malta, Chad, and Spain.

The Reagan administration viewed the Middle East as including the Gulf countries as part of a large politico-strategic theater, the region bounded by Turkey, Pakistan, and the Horn of Africa⁸. The American initiative of May 1996 defines the ME for the purposes of arms control as the region that extends between Iran in the east to Morocco in the west. This definition excludes Turkey, Sudan, the African horn countries and Afghanistan⁹. All definitions have agreed that Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, the West Bank, and Israel are core states. They also agree upon all Gulf countries' membership in the region. Because of the complicated nature of the issue and the absence of some major members, the definition's concept should be flexible and should not be based on geographical limitations at first. The concept may expand by including other countries in later stages. Defining the region may start by regarding territories from inside the region and more towards the outside to expand the scope of peace. Turkey, Iraq, and Iran are considered vital elements in the region and should not be cast out from regional strategic plans. For arms control and security concerns, ballistic missiles and mass destruction weapons (WMD) as well as conventional forces and weapons should be taken into consideration.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Middle East security developments and stability are important for the security of American interests in the region, the security of Israel, Europe and of their alliance member Turkey. From this perspective, western policies insist on two absolute priorities. The first is to revive the floundering peace process, both in its Israeli-Palestinian track and in its Israeli-Lebanese-Syrian one. The second priority should be to initiate a strategy for the launching of comprehensive negotiations on arms control in the Middle East¹⁰.

The Middle East was of direct interest to more members of the Alliance, given their economic dependence on Middle East oil, and the fact that it was a privileged terrain of the East-West confrontation throughout the Cold War. The interests of the European powers, France and Britain, were more limited in the Middle East, covering primarily the Arab States which emerged from the Ottoman empire, and Israel. Today, rather, it is intended to convey the idea that Alliance countries should look at developments in the Middle East not only in terms of the relationship between Israel and the Arab states, but in conjunction with what happens in the sub-region further north, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East¹¹.

Many national, regional, and international leaders and peace actors are looking for a stable and secure region. That might come about when we reach the point of a comprehensive, lasting, and durable peace in the ME. Security and stability of the Middle East are still important to the region and worldwide. However, there are so many questions on this issue, especially after the recent involvement of the United States and Alliance countries in the region.

AMERICAN POLICY AND INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

Active US government involvement in the Middle East began as a result of World War II¹². Since then, U.S strategists have pursued a variety of options in order to promote modernization and to prevent any expansion of Soviet influence in the ME. These options have included the Truman Doctrine, the Eisenhower-Dulles policy of promoting regional security treaties, John F. Kennedy's push for political and economic reforms, the Nixon-Kissinger reliance on regional powers, Jimmy Carter's promise of human rights and Ronald Reagan's reliance on the threat of force to stabilize the ME¹³.

During the recent past, the ME is one of the most important regions to the United States of America. Within the policymaking establishment, the definition of American interests in the ME has been the subject of intense debate. The definition put forward at the start of the Reagan administration by Richard Burt¹⁴ identified four basic interests:

*Demonstrate the ability to counter the Soviets and their allies.

*Ensure continued Western access to the oil of the Gulf in adequate quantities and at a reasonable price.

*Ensure the continued existence and strength of US friends in the region.

*Continue to work toward peace between Israel and its neighbors.

Because the United States is the only nation capable of influencing Israeli policies, the reduction of American credibility can only prolong the vicious circle of violence in the ME. The principal obstacle

toward peace in the region lies in the insecurity of Middle Eastern countries.¹⁵ Only when local states feel confident of United States reliability and secure against external threats, will they be willing to take the necessary risks for peace.¹⁶ Just before the end of the last decade, Arab nations viewed the United States as an accomplice in the shifts of Israeli policies. Whatever the logic of American policy toward Israel, the negative attitudes created in the Arab world militate against building a coalition of moderate Arab states responsive to US interests. More credibility has been gained after American strategists found their crucial task, which lies not so much in finding a cure for the international problems of the region as in seeking to cope with them in ways that will not sacrifice long-term interests for short-term, marginal gain.

Today, the American view of the Middle East, looks too narrow geographically. Rather, it is a complex rearranging of channels of influence where military power, economic resources, ethnic kinship, religious affiliations, and ideological leaning interact to define the future shape of the region. Recently, United States interests in the ME region are derived from different factors such as: the new World Order, the economy, defense and ideological factors. Therefore, the United States Security Strategy for the ME could be summarized as follows; access to oil; Arab-Israeli peace; security; freedom of navigation; access to regional markets; protection of US citizens and property; human rights and democratic development; and successful reform in the former USSR.¹⁷ United States policy objectives reach out to the Gulf region to include Iraq and Iran; the peace process and the security of Israel; terrorism and radicalism; WMD proliferation; and resource disputes (oil and water).¹⁸

United States engagements patterns are arranged accordingly. These engagements could be to strengthen local defense capabilities; promote the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); inter-Arab cooperation; pre positioning rapid response; forward presence and burden sharing; promoting the peace process; and United States bilateral security relations.¹⁹

CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The current security situation in the ME has two main formulas; the first is no peace, no war. This one is simply an unofficial agreement between the countries in the region where the parties involved believe that war is useless. Such a formula falls short from solving other fundamentals of the conflict in the region. The second formula is strategic balance. This formula has been the main cause of the armaments race in the region, gave Israel superiority in terms of military power, and facilitated the emergence of an effective Israeli deterrent theory. One-sided strategic balance, as in this formula, led to an unstable security situation. This formula also falls short from preventing wars to break out. Even though it has played an important deterrent role it is extremely important to note that this formula should not be viewed as a basis for a future security regime.²⁰

FACTORS AFFECTING SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Security in the ME is a multi-dimensional problem. It is related completely to the complexity of the issues in the countries concerned and peripheral states.²¹ The significance of security to the survivability and stability of the nations in the region, especially Israel, puts the question of security as one of their higher priorities, and characterizes it as one of the most sensitive issues in people's lives. Therefore, the relations between nation's security and defense issues should be strengthened and geared accordingly. In general, countries look at security and threat from different angles. This results, some times, in the acceptance of threatening others by force in order to save their own security. So, what might be considered the "security" of a nation is considered a "threat" to another. Interests in the ME on different levels internationally, regionally and nationally are considered consonant factors affecting this problem. In this context I could summarize the existing security problem in four different shapes. These are ***political and security thought structure, the nature of the standing force structure, strategic balance, and geopolitical unbalance***²².

Political and security thought structure. The Arab - Israeli conflict is the core of the security problem. It has much affected all aspects of political and military thought of the countries involved as well as social and human dimensions. It has also left deep impacts on the political thought of the parties involved. The concept that Israel's existence is apt to collapse has become a concrete fact in the Israeli security and political understanding. Subsequently, the only was to confront this threat is by establishing strong and superior military institution capable of unconventional deterrence abilities keeping at the same time all Israeli political and military options open to communication and integration, if needed with the major powers in the world. On the other hand, Arab political and security thinking has developed over the years, as an aftermath of several wars with Israel. Their political theories have developed from the complete rejection of Israeli existence to attempts to alter the strategic balance. Later this has led to initial and provisional acceptance of Israel as a political entity, and to recent negotiations. In spite of the decisive developments on the Arab side, it has never minimized Israel's fear of being threatened, so the security problem still exists and becomes deeper and more serious.

The nature of the standing force structure. The standing force structure forms a basic aspect of the security problem. Whereas Israel has been able to introduce nuclear power, strategic delivery means, and space technology for military purposes to the ME, Israel also has succeeded in developing an advanced conventional military system capable of expanding in all directions. On the Arab side, Iraq tried to introduce nuclear weapon.²³ In spite the Arab failure in this field, they succeeded in building huge conventional military power along with launching capabilities that can strike anywhere in Israel. In addition to more development in the size of the conventional forces, their mobilization and deployment system reflect a critical escalation. Regardless of how and where the ongoing peace process will lead the region, the current huge force structure is regarded as a potential threat to security and stability in the ME.

Strategic Balance. It is important to point out that Israel is superior to its neighbors by all strategic and scientific standards. Since Israel is a full partner in establishing any security system in the region,

such an imbalance in military power should be viewed as the most sensitive element of security in the ME. Practically, this part will be the most complicated issue in case of establishing any regional security system; however, passing it over will turn such system into a symbolic and unstable one.

Geopolitical Imbalances. Issues such as refugees, environment, water, borders, populations, and economy form the fundamentals for tension in this region, and they might cause undesirable security escalations. Such problems are not primary since they have an indirect relation with the security issue; however, they are still believed to be major aspects of the security problem in the ME.

SECURITY AND PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Security, as one of the basic factors that regulates the rhythm of Arab-Israeli peace process and measures its success, receives special and increased importance. Security has been the axis of the conflict over the last five decades and it will serve as an acceptable and useful basis for the future of political relations in the area.²⁴ It will also serve as a basis for the stability, prosperity, and development of societies in the region, a state that will facilitate a smooth access into the new century. This will be an experience of completely different dimensions compared to the experiences of conflict.

It is necessary to draw a distinction between peace and security, since they are closely related. Peace can be contractually concluded, and it will not succeed unless the concerns of the individuals are met, because despite the efforts at government's level, only individuals have the power to make true peace. Meanwhile, security must be earned by building trust and confidence and, above all, by sharing common interests. Therefore, efforts of the parties concerned should be directed towards a change from the culture of war to the culture of peace.²⁵

Real security entails real communications, mingling of cultures, and harmony of interests among the nations. The more this experience is realized by the people of the area, the more true opportunities for real peace and permanent security will be established. Despite the fact that the peace process has caused substantial changes in the concepts of the conflict and transferred the region from a state of direct confrontation to a philosophy of peaceful co-existence, the security issue is still characterized as having a sensitive and complex nature. The security issue is still under the influence of the Arab-Israeli wars.

Despite the political successes achieved at early stages of the peace process, it has not found a comprehensive and integral solution to the security problem in the ME. The peace process in general offered partial and incomplete solutions to some secondary aspects of the security issue. Substantial security questions have been left without political and military treatments.²⁶

ISRAELI SECURITY CONCERNs

Israel's national security strategy has been affected by a number of historical and strategic factors, most of which can be summarized as follows:

*Arab hostility to the establishment of the Jewish state.

*A small country, with no depth protecting it from outside attacks.²⁷

*High population density and industrial concentration that makes the country vulnerable to attack.

Its dependence on outside sources of energy.²⁸

*A relatively small pool of manpower, and a domestic political inability to sustain drawn-out conflicts and take high level casualties.

*Isolated country, far from its alliance partners and, surrounded by hostile countries.

However, Israel's national security strategy has tried to compensate for drawbacks by developing a qualitative edge over regional powers, relying on universal alliance, deterring attack with conventional and unconventional threats, and adopting an offensive military doctrine and force structure.²⁹

Israel's security perceptions have affected its approach to peace negotiations with its Arab partners. Israel's peace treaty with Egypt includes strong security components covering military holdings, troop movements and aerial surveillance of the Sinai.³⁰ Its peace treaty with Jordan commits both countries to refrain from military attack and terrorism against one another.³¹ It also affected its negotiations with the Palestinians. From Israel's perspective its security should not be jeopardized by the development of Palestinian autonomy. Therefore, the phased withdrawal of Israel's Defense Forces from Palestinian Territories, did not correspond with the Palestinians' assumption of administrative control over some designated area, as mentioned in their agreements. Whereas over the past five years Israel has only handed back 3 % of the West Bank, and the transitional period agreed under Oslo came to an end on the 5th May 1999.³² However, the security of Israel will be, in any case, a major issue on the agenda of the final status negotiation with the Palestinians.

Israel has two other security concerns, *the Golan and southern Lebanon*. The two are largely inter-related since they both involve Israeli-Syrian relations.³³ Peace negotiations between the two countries only became possible after the second Gulf War, during which Syrian aligned with the international coalition against Iraq. For security reasons, Golan is important to both Syria and Israel.³⁴ Significant progress in Syrian-Israeli negotiations was reportedly made in 1994 and in 1995. The Israelis suspended the talks unilaterally in March 1996, until few months ago without any noticeable progress.³⁵ According to Syrian sources, under Itzak Rabin, the Labor Government made a commitment of Israel's readiness to withdraw from 95% of the Golan in exchange for peace and normalization. The previous Labor Government believed that President Hafiz Assad of Syria basically wanted peace and was just haggling over the price. The Likud Government is convinced that Syria has little interests in an agreement on the Golan because it would jeopardize its position of control over Lebanon.³⁶

Since its withdrawal from Lebanon in 1985, Israel has kept a 15-kilometer wide "security zone" in the south of the country as a buffer against guerrilla attacks by the Hezbollah militias, which are supported mainly by Iran, and with Syrian usually benevolent approval. Responding to the pressure of his senior officials, and also of public opinion, the Israeli Prime Minister announced on 1 March 1998 that Israel was ready to comply with UN Resolution 425 of 19 March 1978, which mandating Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, if the Lebanese Government co-operated with them in making appropriate security arrangement in Southern Lebanon.³⁷ Lebanon and Syria saw it as a trick to de couple Lebanon's

security's situation from that of Syria. Therefore, that proposal was rejected. Moreover, Syria's implicit position is that Israel should not be allowed to get rid of its self-inflicted troubles in southern Lebanon without a full peace agreement both with Lebanon and Syria, southern Lebanon and the Golan cannot be de coupled. So, a "Lebanon first" option, in whatever form, is bound to fail.

Israel is also concerned about the new threats stemming from the potential acquisition of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction in Iran and Iraq. Israelis never forgot the Scud attacks against Tel Aviv in 1991. Most analysts stress that proliferation of ballistic missile technology in the region does not constitute an existential threat to the country. However, Israel is cooperating actively with the United States to modernize its anti-missile defense systems.³⁸

EGYPTIAN SECURITY CONCERNs

Despite the fact that the 1977 visit to Israel by president Anwar Sadat of Egypt was crucial to breaking down psychological walls, Egypt suffered isolation from the Arab world as a result of signing the peace treaty with Israel in 1979. However, the breakup of the Soviet Union and the second Gulf War enabled the Egyptian government to break out of that isolation, while remaining committed to peace with Israel. The subsequent Israeli-Palestinian Oslo accords, and the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan strengthened Egypt's stand. But on the other hand, as more and more Arab countries were proving ready to normalize their relations with Israel, Egypt's position might became less special to such influential outsiders as the United States, and its intervention less courted.³⁹

After its contribution with the international coalition in the Gulf War, Egypt tried to re-emerge as the leading power among the Arabs, and hoped to play a significant role in the Palestinian question. Egypt's ability to influence Middle Eastern developments is hampered by a series of factors. The most important is the weakness of its economy. Despite its attempts to transform its formerly planned economy into a market one and its respectable rate of economic growth⁴⁰, Egypt is unable to provide its rapidly increasing population, half of which is under 20, with the education, job prospects, social services, medical care, etc, to which it aspires. Egypt depends on four uncommon assets: a work force employed in wealthier Arab countries, oil, tourism and the Suez Canal. During the last two years Egypt faced one challenge after another, violent extremists, frightened tourists, low oil prices, and stagnant world trade. Now, the Egyptian economy depends primarily on some US \$ 2.1 billion in aid from the United States every year, in addition to the stabilizing effect on employment and incomes of revenues earned by more than two million expatriate workers abroad.⁴¹

The other related factor is the fragility of its political order. The immediate impact of economic weaknesses is to cause important social dislocations, which can easily be exploited by dissenting groups to upset the political order. The government also has vowed to eradicate political Islam, refusing to differentiate more moderate forms of Islamism as represented by the Islamic groups. Islamic parties are forbidden. Since the middle of last decade the government has moved against the Muslim Brotherhood, accusing the Islamic groups of being the secular wing of the violent groups. As a result, six Islamist

insurgents killed 58 tourists and 3 Egyptians at Luxor on 17 November 1997⁴². However, despite the fact that Egypt is the largest Arab country, its domestic weaknesses hampered its ability to act decisively in the foreign policy arena.

Egypt signed for the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, but it blames Israel for contributing to the arms race and weapons proliferation in the region by sustaining an accelerated pace of modernization of its armed forces and maintaining a secret arsenal of some 100-200 nuclear weapons. So Egypt remains wary of any Israeli attempt to beef up its fighting ability.⁴³

Egypt also has reacted very disapprovingly to the Israeli-Turkish axis, stressing that it was unhelpful to regional stability in the context of growing Arab discontent with Israel. Egypt tries to maintain its water resources in a co-operative manner with the two countries that control the Nile upper streams. Following the improvement of its relations with Ethiopia in 1995, it has improved its security situation with Sudan also.

Before signing the Camp David Accord, Egypt and Israel had their own experience on bilateral security issues. Soon after the 1973 war, bilateral negotiations started in order to reach a sort of agreement and develop the operational and political solution to prevent any potential wars between the two parties. The first agreement in this regard was the first Sinai accord. The United Nations Emergency Force II (UNEF II) emerged accordingly.⁴⁴ UN forces deployed in a buffer zone east of the Suez Canal in order to monitor and control the implementation of Sinai.⁴⁵ The second Sinai agreement was signed right after the deployment of UNEF II in 1975. In order to help the gradual Israeli withdrawal to the mid Sinai, a buffer zone will be established in the middle between Egyptian and Israeli forces. Egyptians and Israelis agreed to invite the American Field Mission (SFM) to establish an improved reconnaissance system and promote trust building measures between the two parties.⁴⁶

In the context of the Camp David Accord, security measures are based on two main principles, land for peace and security for security. The two parties agreed to protect the freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal, establish demilitarized zones and develop confidence building measures between them. The occupied area has been divided into four parts, three of which are in Sinai and the fourth part in Israel. The level of forces to be stationed in each part should be limited to the size mentioned in the agreement. Multi-national forces and observers would control the designated area.⁴⁷

JORDANIAN SECURITY CONCERN

Jordan's geopolitical location has enabled it to assume a very significant role in the security and stability of a volatile Middle East. Looked at from a different angle, however, this location has constantly made Jordan conscious of the dangers engulfing its own security. For example, the state of animosity between countries on its flanks may add a new dimension to this feeling of insecurity. If hostilities break out between these countries, their use of chemical and other weapons of mass destruction against one another may render Jordan a killing zone for its own people.⁴⁸

Jordan has always been committed to peaceful means for the resolution of conflicts. Its policies have been predicated on an unwavering belief in dialogue and political options as the best mechanism for insuring lasting security and stability. Jordan believes that regional and international cooperation is essential for bringing about and consolidating peace and stability. Accordingly, Jordan has supported all efforts for achieving peace in the region and beyond. Since 1989, Jordan's Armed Forces have actively participated in the collective security arrangements sponsored by the United Nations in different parts of the world.⁴⁹

Jordan political leadership has been capable of understanding the general trends of the development of political and security circumstances in the ME. It has defined the major landmarks of the existing political reality; and presented its own vision of the future in the ME in the frame of a unique and creative political initiative that calls for the establishment of a comprehensive and regional system based on cooperation rather than confrontation or competition. Consequently, Jordan's security policy has been carefully devised throughout its extensive international friendly network based on a non-alliance strategy, moderation, flexibility, liability, and cooperation.⁵⁰

Jordan is one of the key players in the region before and after the peace settlement with Israel. The reasons regarding both direct and indirect security concerns, could be summarized as follows:

*Jordan has the longest and most dangerous borders with Israel, (almost about 480 KMs, most of them rough terrain).

*Hosting the majority of the Palestinian refugees.⁵¹

*Acting as a buffer zone between Israel on one side and Iraq and Iran on the other side. It also acts as the depth and the buffer zone to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries especially before the peace settlement with Israel.

*Controlling the north borders with Syria, which prevents any Syrian use of Jordanian soil for any offensive operations against Israel.

*The role-played by Jordan and its leadership to prevent any communist expansion. Despite the fact that Jordan used to be surrounded by two sponsors of the communist movement in the region, Iraq and Syria, the animosity of Jordanian late king Hussein to this issue was known to every body.

*Although the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty saved the continuation of peace in the region, the reality became even harder after that. Jordan has been put under pressure, and therefore, has had to deploy more troops along its borders in order to thwart illegal crossing that may eventually harm the peace partners and the entire peace process.

*Being neutral during the Gulf War, which calmed the Palestinian population whether in Jordan or in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. That absorbed any terrorism operations on Jordanian soil, or even against Israel.

Many international and regional organizations, whether political, economic, or academic, have presented their understanding of the ME geographic concept. All definitions without any exception, agree that Jordan lies in the core of the region and that it is one of the region's basic components.⁵² Hence,

Jordan is a basic element in any regional arrangements of any kind and in any context. Ignorance of this fact is not only going to diminish the actual value of these arrangements, but it also poses a frank direct threat to security and stability in the region.

Jordan has no coast line on the Mediterranean; in this sense Jordan is not a Mediterranean country. However, all countries participated in the Barcelona conference approved full Jordanian participation in the conference. This means that Jordan is eligible for the privileges and commitments of Euro-Med. Partnership. Of course, Europe does not see Jordan as a demographic threat as is the case with North African countries. Nor has it ambitions to open the Jordanian market for its products. So, to answer the question why did Europe approve Jordan's participation? Europe is doing that to state frankly a central Jordanian role in the region security arrangements whether in the ME or in the Mediterranean concept.

Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty

Regional security became more decisive after both parties, Jordan and Israel, signed the peace treaty. The treaty included the following texts regarding regional security:⁵³

*Both parties aim towards a regional framework of partnership in peace. Towards that goal the parties recognize the achievements of the European Community and European Union in the Conference on Security and Co –operation in Europe (CSCE) and commit themselves to the creation, in the ME, of a CSCME (Conference on Security and Co-operation in the ME). The commitment entails the adoption of regional models of security successfully implemented in the post world war era (along the lines of the Helsinki process) culminating in a regional zone of security and stability.

*To work as a matter of priority and as soon as possible in the context of the multilateral working group on arms control and regional security, and jointly, towards the creation in the ME of a region free from hostile alliances and coalitions, the creation of a ME free of weapons of mass destruction, both conventional and non-conventional, in the context of a comprehensive, lasting and stable peace, characterized by the renunciation of the use of force, reconciliation and goodwill.

*In addition to what has been mentioned in these texts, all of which deal with the direct side of security, the treaty includes other provisions regarding non-military aspects of security (water, regional economic relations, and population problems).

Jordan's commitment to a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict has at times put the country on a collision course with an anti-western coalition of forces. By so doing, Jordan contributes significantly to stabilizing the region and creating an environment that strengthens the willing forces in the region to make peace an attainable objective

Despite serious opposition both inside and outside, Jordan has concluded a historic peace treaty with Israel. The risk to Jordan in taking such a decision far exceeds that to both Egypt and Israel when they signed the Camp David Accord. However, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has brought into effect new realities in the region and given a new momentum to the peace process. In practical terms, the peace treaty with Israel reasserts Jordan's traditions role as a key player in the ME.

On a broader level, the treaty has also prevented the total collapse of the entire peace process. Indeed, the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has become an anchor of a regional peace, especially when faced with stagnation on the Syrian-Israel track and the current upsurge of violence and problems on the Palestinian and Lebanese fronts.

From a regional security aspects, Jordan looks at security aspects from several angles within an integrated form and believes that national, regional, and global security should be considered as well. Jordan has committed to a regional security system, which should be comprehensive in scope and incremental in implementation. Jordan's objectives for such a system include: enhancing stability in the region, promoting economic cooperation, reducing the probability of war, minimizing military roles, regulating the arms race by rules and procedures, reducing military expenditures, and promoting political development, democracy, and respect for human rights and the rule of law in the region.⁵⁴

REGIONAL SECURITY CONCERNs

The Middle East represents both historical disparities and contemporary international interests. The international interests in regional security in the ME are more obvious than the regional and local interests. This includes the security of oil, the Arab Gulf, Israel, freedom of navigation of the Suez Canal, the Gulf of Aqaba, the Red Sea, and the strategic straits and water ways. In this concept, international security in the ME prevails over regional security.

Although the ME is currently undergoing a very critical transitional period, a comprehensive approach to the issues of peace and security at the global, regional, and national levels is essential in order to enable an integrated approach to the complex multi-dimensional military and non-military challenges to security in the future. Regional security concerns may be divided into two substantial issues, Hard Security Concerns, which include direct strategic military issues, and Soft Security Concerns, which include non-military dimensions:

HARD SECURITY CONCERNs

*Threats against regional security are not limited to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but they might extend to include conflicts between other countries in the ME. For example, there is a possibility of Arab-Arab political differences or conflicts.⁵⁵ The restarting of the Iraqi-Iranian conflict, the conflict between Iran and the Gulf States, and the Syria-Turkish conflict are examples. There is also a possibility of ethnic as well as religious conflict. In addition, there are potential regional conflicts in peripheral countries which may affect the security of the region such as the conflict between Turkey and Greece, India and Pakistan, Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and that between warring factions in Afghanistan.

*Strategic Balance and Deterrent Theory. Since a direct relationship has been established between these two concepts during the conflict stage in such a way as to affect aspects of the conflict, it is logical that these two issues are taken into consideration. Their capability to play a deterrent role for the advantage of any member in the region no longer exists, specifically the conventional and non-conventional Israeli deterrent system.

***The relationship between national security and regional security for each country.** A general agreement about legitimate national needs for legitimate defense purposes is a vital matter. This relationship is connected to the threat perspective for each state in the region and is also connected to the international guarantees offered to any member or to the entire region.

***Strategic and Military Doctrine.** Offensive doctrines were adopted in the conflict stages, and the doctrine of the preemptive strikes as well as the doctrine of deterrence by doubt should be reconsidered in a way that threats can be solved through a co-operative collective security approach. Such an approach might allow a change from the philosophy of running the conflict on the basis of military strategies or offensive doctrines to a philosophy of preventing conflicts through co-operative security strategies within a regional security system.

***Defensive Budgets and levels of military expenditure.** Whereas high budgets allow the sustainment of qualitative supremacy, and place the doctrines defensive policies and the offensive in an operational form, the proper way to secure an acceptable security status lies in making noticeable reductions in expenditures. Such reductions should go together with the general objective to achieve the security of the region, and match with the philosophy of directing the people's potentialities towards development.

***The future of the current power structures.** It is widely known that the current power structures represent the state of war, and any attempt to reduce them will certainly express the regional cooperative state and achieve some of its objectives.

***Terrorism.** Terrorism has transformed from a singular phenomenon into a collective one with regional and international dimensions.⁵⁶ Therefore, political and social outcomes, in any country in the region, will greatly affect the current security situation, especially the fact that some countries in the region have at various times played a destabilizing role through the sponsorship of terrorism.⁵⁷

***Smuggling Activities.** There is an ever-present threat to the sovereignty of some regional states from smuggling of narcotics and weapons, whether intended for the local market or en route to other countries. Allied to this is the threat from infiltrators who might try to enter other states for economic reasons, or to promote terrorism against bordering countries as in the case of Jordan and Israel.

***Anti Peace Forces.** A number of political groups have publicly declared opposition to the peace treaty. To date, they have been unable to generate enough support. However, lack of progress on other tracks, particularly on the Israeli-Palestinian track, might gradually convert public indifference into supporting these groups. In the process, acts of sabotage, assassinations, and border infiltrations can be expected, causing, therefore, threats to the security of the region. Furthermore, some regional countries would be ready to support such groups with money, weapons and ideology.

***Radicals and Extremists.** Some regional states complain of radicals and extremists who pose threat to their existing governments as evidenced in Algeria, Egypt, and other countries. Some others have been successful in implementing a policy of inclusion, such as the case of Jordan. Added to this, are the threats posed by radicals and extremists to the security of other regional states.

***Confidence Building Measures.** These measures are considered the cornerstone in developing regional security. Unlike other issues, confidence building measures have great chances of success. Some of these measures are the exchange of military information, military visits between commanders, staff officers and different military academies, the reciprocal participation in military activities and exercises, and the establishment of hot lines at high levels. Undoubtedly, these measures greatly help build trust; yet, they don't address the genuine elements of security.

SOFT SECURITY CONCERNs

*Security in its broad sense includes the military dimension, (which was vitally important in the Arab-Israeli case), but it also includes the political, social, and economic dimensions. Issues such as food, water, poverty, energy, unemployment, development, population, natural resources, inflation, foreign debts, standard of living, and many others form political, social, and economic tension spots that might explode at any time.

*An expansion of the security concept is required in the ME today, to include " human resources, natural resources including water and land, and economic as well as military factors. Security covers a matrix of inter-connected issues such as food, water, energy, technology, finance, transport and communications, and includes question of domestic structure as well as questions of foreign policy".⁵⁸

*The genuine ME problem is not the shortage of human or natural resources, rather than the mechanisms adopted in investment and development schemes. Such mechanisms have not so far successfully addressed the genuine element of security for the countries in the region; nor have they truly dealt with the principal discrepancies between the peoples of this region. Therefore, the discrepancies between the neighboring countries such as Jordan/Israel, Yemen/Saudi Arabia, Libya/Algeria, and Morocco/Mauritania should be seriously taken into consideration.

***Food Security.** This problem addresses the discrepancy between the economic resources available to produce food, and the real demand for the foodstuffs and their international prices. As a result, food security, for all countries, becomes a vital cause that takes priority.⁵⁹

***Population.** From the concept of the security dimension, population is the substance of war and its objective. Therefore, the comprehensive management of population issues is considered a prerequisite to improve the concept of regional security. It is widely known that no country, regardless of its GNP (gross national production), can achieve high standards of social development alone by itself. Some countries have made some national breakthroughs. But this is not considered success as far as regional security is concerned; rather it is a source of tension that might be exported.⁶⁰ Finally, any genuine population development should be directed into two dimensions: the first national, and the second regional.

***Human Rights and Freedom.** It is a fact that he who enjoys all his political and his social rights is a productive citizen, and so is his society. Therefore, the confiscation of freedoms, lack of democracy, and oppression will create a volatile, tense environment that might explode at any time. At the regional level, democracy based on public satisfaction is the best barrier against extremism.

***Water.** Water has been considered a serious and on-going threat to countries of the region; that is what makes some writers predict that future conflicts in the region will be over water. It is worth indicating that 67% of Arab rivers originate outside Arab territories. Turkey nowadays exercises pressure through its new philosophy of "water for oil"; this policy might provoke the countries of the region to search for water resources outside their national soil. Undoubtedly, such a concept might be the spark that ignites serious outbreaks in the region.⁶¹

***Economic Development.** It is not necessary to elaborate on the Arab-Israeli conflict which, over the last five decades, has had a dominant influence on the structure of the region's security, and has shattered the economies of the ME. Therefore, instability has stood in the way of genuine development. The principal aspect of economic development in the region lies in the full participation of the relevant countries in joint ventures in a variety of fields such as agriculture, industry, commerce, telecommunication, infrastructures and water. Such ventures will lead to economic development among the countries of the region, a concept that makes war a threat not only to one country but also to all countries concerned.⁶² The economic conferences that held in Casablanca (1994), Amman (1995), Cairo (1996) and Doha (1997) are serious attempts to achieve such a goal.

***Culture Misperception.** Based on different cultural principles such as religious, ethnic, and historical background, style of life (western and eastern style), the ME region is rich of mixed cultures, which may cause problems to the security of the region in case of misunderstanding. So, creating nations in which all people, regardless of race, or religion, live in an atmosphere of freedom, tolerance, and mutual respect is required.

***Social Factors.** The massive waves of migration coupled with reduction in foreign aid have exerted enormous pressure on affected states. These combined factors have contributed to a rise in the level of un-employment and created disparities of income. In addition, the annual growth of the economy in many of the regional states is insufficient to provide jobs for all those seeking employment. Therefore, energies should be directed towards solving problems in this sector to thwart potential security threats.

ARMS CONTROL AND REGIONAL SECURITY

Arms control is one of the important issues in the Middle East. It has become more and more important since the beginning of the last settlement between Israel and the Arab states on October 1991. Arms control is essential for regional security, and both of them are intimately linked. Unlike arms control, regional security is a broader concept, encompassing not only the military but also economics and politics. Of course, security depends greatly on arms control. Successes and progress in arms control negotiations in the ME will help shape the acceptability of security measures needed to achieve bilateral peace. In light of the Gulf War and long – standing historical rivalries in the ME, there is widespread concern about the past and future importation of sophisticated conventional and unconventional weapons into this already heavily armed region.

ARMS COMPETITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

For different reasons the Middle East countries have pursued a noticeable armament race, in both fields, conventional and unconventional.⁶³ The most important of these reasons, in addition to the fact of competition between the two superpowers, is that the regional countries have pursued their national security interests by expanding and modernizing their military forces rather than by reaching political compromises. Such a phenomenon has two forms: the first implies the development, production, procurement, transportation, and accumulation of armament. The other implies the regular build up of armed forces.

However, the experience of more than four decades of conflict, instability, and wars has led the regional states to focus on procuring military equipment, and opening the door to a regional arms race.⁶⁴ During the beginning of the last decade, five of the world's ten largest recipients have been in the ME.⁶⁵

The largest suppliers of conventional arms to the ME as well as worldwide have been for a long time and are likely to continue to be the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. They accounted from 1974 to 1989 for more than 75% of the estimated total of \$220 to \$250 billion in arms trade in the ME.⁶⁶ The two largest suppliers, were the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. However, the United States has significantly increased its arms exports to the region after 1978, a fact reflected by the more than \$14.5 billion in US arms sales to Saudi Arabia in 1990.⁶⁷

In the field of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the Middle East and North Africa have the highest concentration of these types of weapons and missiles programs of any region in the world. They have been acquired through direct purchase, domestic development, or a combination of the two. This trend is dangerous because as states become self-sufficient, they become less susceptible to outside pressure.⁶⁸

The quest to achieve a balance of power, the lack of trust between Arabs and Israelis, and the perception that the United States in its regional role is not even handed in its treatment of local actors are the factors contributing to the vertical and horizontal proliferation trends that are making the region highly dangerous and volatile.⁶⁹

The United States has concluded that Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, are aggressively seeking NBC weapons and increased missile capabilities. From the Arab side, Arabs believe that the Israeli nuclear arsenal poses a threat to their security, so they have to acquire a strategic balance. Therefore, they have sought WMD capabilities in the form of the "poor man's weapons", such as chemical and biological capability.⁷⁰

In the Old World Order, America provided considerable support to Israel to guarantee its qualitative edge over the Arabs, while the Soviet Union supported the major Arab rejectionist states. The Arabs accepted that, as it was undertaken in the context of the East-West conflict.⁷¹ The United States tried through Israel and some Arab countries to stop and limit communist expansion in the region.

There is a delicate relation between the comprehensive and regional trends. The international projects on arms control offer comprehensive international initiatives not limited to the ME countries, which find themselves obliged to adhere to such efforts simply because they are members in the international society. Such projects include limits on nuclear tests and compliance with the biological, chemical and ballistic missiles treaties. The Arab countries find themselves committed to joining such agreements; Israel finds itself an alibi on the nuclear issue.

However, international policies will have a direct impact on the ME region regardless of the outcomes of the multilateral negotiations. Since Israel can over come these impacts either through its nuclear option or through its alliance with the USA, the Arab side of the conflict is the most probable to suffer from this issue. Consequently, the Arab countries will lose the necessary negotiating power to express their opinion on the arms control question. It is important to say that these impacts correspond to the United States' perspective regarding the strategic balance in the region.

GOALS OF ARMS CONTROL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Arms control is something new to the hearts and minds of the people in the ME as well as other regions in the world. There is confusion between arms control, arms limitations, arms reductions, arms embargoes, and disarmament. Arms control ideally means promoting the national security of all regional countries without discrimination, by limiting or reducing the threat posed by adversaries or neighboring countries to insure peace. Arms control is aimed at ensuring security and legitimate defense at lower and less dangerous levels.⁷²

The Middle East arms control process begun at Madrid ⁷³ aims at helping to make and ensure a lasting, comprehensive, and just peace. Therefore, regional arms control would meet the interests of the countries involved, and reduce the pace of the arms race through diverting arms funds into social and economic development.

Despite the complexity of Middle Eastern issues, especially in the security field, the goals of arms control must be ambitious. These goals can be summarized as follows:⁷⁴

*Military stability, in order to prevent any specialized capabilities that enhance the ability of one country to create a dramatic change in the balance of regional military power.

*Military transparency and predictability, which are necessary to help military leaders to avoid the "worst- case analyses", which creates additional pressures for an arms build up, not arms control.

*Crisis stability, which is still important. If the region achieves peace, the potential for differences and contradictions leading to problems and disputes will always remain. Therefore, there should be some sort of regional procedures in order to avoid crises as well as to notify the concerned regional parties to prevent a crisis.

*Prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons and associated delivery systems. Of course, it is also a global responsibility. The ME countries cannot accept an Israeli or any other monopoly.

*Reduction in the consequences of war if one occurs, which is the logical result of any reduction of the capabilities of conflicting forces.

*Reducing the cost of security and defense, which should be a major and noble objective in the ME. The priority should today be economic, social, cultural, and educational in order for the region to join the advanced world.

*Improvement in political relations. Generally speaking, any progress in arms control efforts signals relative improvements in political relations.

*At a minimum, arms control measures could delay or possibly prevent a new round of weapons competition and military activities, which may serve as a catalyst to inadvertent or accidental war.⁷⁵

CURRENT TRENDS TO CONTROL ARMAMENT IN THE ME

The absence of some regional states such as Syria, Iran, Iraq and Libya, from the multilateral negotiations is considered a primary reason for not commencing serious negotiations regarding arms control. However, the following are visions of some participating countries.

From the **Israeli perspective**, the elements required for arms control are clearly expressed in two areas: the first is the necessity to create a political environment that includes an overall diplomatic exchange, termination of belligerency, avoidance of cease fire violations, the atmosphere of confidence, compliance with the agreements, reconciliation and normalization between the people in the region, and participation of all regional parties.

The second is related to negotiations for a new ME free from nuclear, biological and chemical warfare, which are to start not later than two years after achieving the political environment mentioned above. Moreover, negotiations should address the reduction of the number of arms and their war machines. Endorsing such measures will be considered obligatory for all the countries in the region.⁷⁶

From the **Egyptian perspective**, the central consideration is that it is necessary to define the types of weapons required to be addressed, as well as the role of weapon supplying countries in supporting and meeting such procedures:

* Special interest should be paid to highly developed conventional weapons such as smart ammunition, laser equipment, and long range bombers.

*For Weapons of Mass Destruction, all concerned parties should adhere to the non-proliferation treaty (NPT), and accept verification systems to check and assess nuclear facilities on a regional basis. All parties concerned should also sign and comply with the biological and chemical conventions.

*It is quite necessary to define what ballistic missiles cause instability in the region, and the number of the missiles locally produced or the ones produced outside the region. This entails the middle-range surface to surface, international, sea-land or land-sea and anti-ballistic missile systems.⁷⁷

From the **Jordanian perspective**, regional countries should endorse all international agreements regarding non-conventional weapons in order to conceive a new ME free from all forms of mass destruction weapons. Meanwhile, the possession or production of nuclear weapons or ballistic

missiles should be frozen. A regional commission to pursue such aims would be of paramount importance. Arms control negotiations should not be carried out in favor of one country over the other. There are two mechanisms through which the assessment of the military balance can be addressed: first by comparing numbers, and second by analyzing/comparing combat performance. Additionally, relevant rules and regulations should be set up to regulate the reduction of weaponry between regional parties.⁷⁸

After perusing the three above-mentioned visions, one notices the unmistakable similarity between the Jordanian and Egyptian visions. The two sides demand all countries in the region to endorse and abide by the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, along with the chemical and biological treaties or conventions. Where Jordan demands a ME free from all forms of weapons of mass destruction, Egypt refers only to nuclear weapons. Furthermore, while Egypt required special verification systems, Jordan requires the establishment of a regional commission to carry out such a verification. Also, the Egyptian vision gives special importance to highly technical non-conventional weapons, where Jordan's vision tackles the political and strategic dimensions.

The Israeli vision implies many ambiguous terms. Hence the question of the continual compliance of other parties refers to no definite timetable, and this simply means that such a compliance might run over the years without a concrete commitment on the Israeli side to commence arms control negotiations. This concept applies also to the normalization issue which may take years to settle.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE?

Before putting down any ideas about what might be done, there should be an opposite question such as what can't be done? In another words what are the major problems or obstacles on the way to arms control?. The most important of them is the lack of confidence and trust between Arabs and Israelis. On the other hand, Iraq and Iran still represent a major threat to Israel. Their capabilities in WMD and missile systems could be the main reason for Israeli resistance to any progress in this field, in addition to lack of progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

However, In light of the quantitative and qualitative growth of different types of arms in the ME, it is hopelessly optimistic and probably wrong to assume that the arms race and competition will end soon. It is also wrong to assume that these trends are irreversible and, therefore, to conclude that nothing can be done.

There have been many regional and international initiatives to control the armament race in this region. Over the past four decades, in the Middle East, there have been a number of failed arms control initiatives and proposals. The first was early 1950's agreement between the U.S, France, and U.K to limit arms in the region. In 1974 the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) proposal was put forward to the U.N General Assembly by Egypt and co-sponsored by Iran. Unfortunately all these attempts have faltered. Such failure is due to several logical reasons, the most important of which is the lack of will to politically address the Arab-Israeli conflict. When the conflicting parties became involved in bilateral and multilateral negotiations, two approaches crystallized. The first is comprehensive arms control, including all international initiatives for arms control in the ME, the most important of which is president Bush's 1991,

Paris Declaration 1991 of the five permanent Security Council members, the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), The Biological warfare convention 1993/1997 (CWC) and comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) 1996. The second is regional armament control as an integral part in the multilateral negotiations. All efforts in this regard to day have been mere theories.⁷⁹

There is now growing international interest in exploring arms control possibilities in the ME. So there should be concerted efforts among the world's leading arms suppliers to limit the quantity and quality of sophisticated conventional arms being exported to the ME.

The recent history of war and the accumulation of suspicion between the different parties in the ME lead to some feeling that improving the regional political environment is a prerequisite for successful and productive regional arms control measures. Any long – term solution to conflict in the ME must ultimately involve the cooperation of the nations in the region.

There should be an attempt to take advantage of arms control possibilities in the post-Cold War and post-Gulf War environment. Initially, modest steps can and should be taken to help curb the arms competition in the ME. Increased transparency of arsenals and arms transfers are a good first step. The world's major suppliers involved in multilateral talks must go beyond well-meaning rhetoric and the steps to increase transparency about arms transfers. They should take the initiative first among themselves and then among so-called second-tier suppliers.⁸⁰

The United States, as a leading country to the five powers should control the armament in the ME, and adopt certain systems to prevent the presence of the high technology scale to the minimum. They should take the lead in developing any type of organization for the purpose of developing, monitoring, and enforcing an agreed- upon list of technologies whose transfer to the ME would be strictly monitored. They should give far higher priority to supporting and furthering international efforts to curb the proliferation of unconventional weapons. They should also call for the procurement and testing of ballistic missiles as they should push to curtail their proliferation through a ban on the sale of missiles or their component technologies by all suppliers to Middle Eastern countries. In the future, the United States must give the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention much higher priority than it has received this far.

The world's major arms suppliers need to help develop a series of confidence and security building measures that would be relevant and acceptable to the countries in the ME. Confidence building measures in the ME should include some procedures such as hot line agreements, the establishment of an international center for the prevention of conflict, and the expanded use of cooperative aerial inspections.⁸¹

CONCLUSION

Despite the peace agreements between Israel and some of its neighboring countries, still, there are real conflicts of interests, a high level of suspicion and distrust as a result of decades of conflict and rejection, and domestic opposition on both sides to the agreements and the peace process. The success

of the Arab-Israeli process, as a package, is essential to the security and stability of the Middle East. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process as well as the Israeli-Lebanese-Syrian one should be taken into consideration. These processes cannot be left to the parties themselves. Previous experience demonstrates that no progress has been accomplished in the past without the active involvement of the United States, but this involvement needs to be balanced.

Despite the complexity of Middle Eastern issues, trust, confidence building measures, and arms control are different factors that can help lead the region toward a durable peace. Arms control is affected by any progress on the peace track. Simultaneously; it affects the peace process. Therefore, this issue should be seriously taken into considerations. Arms race competition will not end soon, but it is wrong to assume that nothing can be done.

Security in the Middle East should be earned by building trust and confidence, and above all, by sharing common interests. Therefore, the efforts of the parties should be directed towards a change from the culture of war to the culture of peace. Practically, partners in the region should look at security aspects from several angles within an integrated form and believe that national, regional, and global security should be considered as well.

The geopolitical implications of the proliferation of weapons in the Middle East, which is one of the most heavily armed regions of the world, and the largest market for weapons transfers to the developing world are vital. Multi-pronged efforts will be necessary to decrease the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, through disarmament, if possible, and if not, through confidence-building measures and, in any case, by stemming their further proliferation. A strategy of comprehensive negotiations on arms control in the Middle East would have the best chance of success if it was jointly sponsored by the United States and the Europeans. Russia should be included as a major partner, because of Russia's share in technological input in arms moderation in the Middle East and because constructive Russian involvement would be an incentive for other Arab states and Iran to participate. Middle East security developments will have to be gradually integrated into the work program of the NATO-Russia Joint Council, beginning with the issue of arms proliferation.

Regional security and arms control are essential in the ME, which is now, at least from the United States' point of view, among the most likely sites of future international hostilities. Many of the countries in the region look at peace, security and arms control agreements as means to produce potential economic benefits by reducing military spending. Minimum progress is expected, unless joint efforts are forthcoming on the international level, as well as on the national and regional levels.

Word count = 11492

ENDNOTES

¹ For more details, see United Nations Resolutions 224 and 338, U.S.official statements, Golan Heights, institute for Palestine studies, Washington DC,p119-120.

² There are different views of what security means, in Israel. The Labor party believed that the best guarantee of Israel's security was in granting Palestinian autonomy to designated territory, while the Likud leader was more likely to guarantee the security of Israel, so his prime-ministerial campaign in 1996 was run primarily on the theme of security.

³ Dr Kamel Abu Jaber, "Jordanian minister of foreign affairs during Oslo talks", opening remarks, conference on " Challenges of Peace Support: into 21 Century", 18-20 October 1998, Amman, Jordan.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Research paper presented at Helsinki workshop on arms control and regional security, 29th of May 1995.

⁶ Four conferences were held, the first in Casablanca, Morocco 1994; the second in Amman, Jordan 1995; the third in Cairo, Egypt 1996; the fourth in Doha, Qatar 1997.

⁷ From Arab states perspective, the participant countries in the peace settlement especially on multilateral track is required.

⁸ Samuel Wells and Mark Bruzonsky, Security in the Middle East, regional change and great power strategies, p7and p234.

⁹ Israeli research paper presented at Arms Control and Regional Security Conference, Doha, Qatar 1994.

¹⁰ Dr. Alvaro de Vasconcelos (PO), lecture on "security in the Mediterranean region", NATO War College, 21 April 1999.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The American troops were sent to Iran to establish the Persian Gulf command in 1943.

¹³ Samuel Wells and Mark Bruzonsky, Ibid p6.

¹⁴ Richard Burt, director of the state department's bureau of politico-military affairs, mentioned before a house subcommittee meeting on March 23, 1981.

¹⁵ Reported in the Middle East, fifth edition (Washington DC Congressional quarterly, 1981), PP6-7.

¹⁶ Richard Burt, see Samuel and Mark, security in the Middle East, Ibid p 7.

¹⁷ 8 Of 15 states have ties to Islam.

¹⁸ Efrain Inbar, regional security regimes, Israel and its neighbors, state university of New York press, 1995 pp64-67.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Dr Kamel Abu Jaber, Ibid.

²¹ Such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, etc.

²² Prince Hassan Bin Talal, previous crown prince of Jordan, conference on arms control and regional security, Amman, Jordan 1995.

²³ Sami G. Hajjar, security implication of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, pp 7 and 12.

²⁴ Report of A JCSS study group, Israel's options for peace, pp 28, 55, 75, 101, and 143.

²⁵ Steven Speiegel and David Pervin, practical peacemaking in the Middle East, arms control and regional security by Abdullah Toukan pp 26-30.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Especially before 1967, Israeli's size and depth were very limited in comparison with Arab states. Its east-west depth was not exceed, in particular point, 20 KMs.

²⁸ While its Arab neighboring countries have their own oil.

²⁹ Dr. Phebe MARR(U.S), security in the Mediterranean region (panel), NATO War College, 21 April 1999.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² The latest announcement that, on last two weeks media, Israel will handed back some additional territory to be 6.2% total.

³³ Directly in the first case, the Golan, and indirectly in the second, because of the strong Syrian influence and presence in Lebanon.

³⁴ The Golan is important to both countries for security reasons and because it is an important reservoir, at present, Israel derives 30% of its drinking water from the Golan. It also brings Israel's security perimeter some 50 KM away from the Syrian capital, Damascus.

³⁵ Minister Khalid Alioua (Morocco), security in the Mediterranean region (panel), NATO War College, 21 April 1999.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ UN Resolution 425, see Geoffry Kemp and Jeremy pressnan, point of no return, the deadly struggle for Middle East peace, Brooking Institution Press, 1997, pp 122-126.

³⁸ Dr. Phebe MARR(U.S), security in the Mediterranean region (panel), Ibid.

³⁹ Dr. Alvaro de Vasconcelos (PO), security in the Mediterranean region, NATO War College, 21 April 1999.

⁴⁰ For example, it was 4.9% in 1996.

⁴¹ Dr. Alvaro de Vasconcelos, *Ibid*.

⁴² That policy has effectively brought the movement into disarray. It has also the effect of pushing small fugitive groups into the underground, beefing up the ranks of those determined to take violent revenge.

⁴³ Sami Hajjar, *Ibid* pp 17-19.

⁴⁴ Steven L. Spiegel, the Arab- Israeli search for peace, Lynne Rienner publishers, London 1992, pp 152-153.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ Lesch and Tessler, Israel, Egypt, and the Palestinians, from Camp David to Intifada, Indiana university press 1989, p46.

⁴⁸ Jordan is relatively a small country in its region, in terms of size, population, and resources. Surrounded by Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Israel. Undoubtedly, therefore, it has the least economic and military power compared with neighboring countries.

⁴⁹ Jordans' largest participation was during 1992-1994 in former Yugoslavia. Jordan Armed Forces participated with three battalions at one time. The total number of participants exceeds 15000.

⁵⁰ President Clinton announced that Jordan is one of the Non-NATO countries.

⁵¹ Some writers estimate that almost about 50% of the total Jordanian population are palestinians. Jordan received the major Palestinian waves of refugees in 1948, 1967 and 1991.

⁵² Agency for international nuclear energy, document under the number IASA-Gov/ INF/568, 19 July 1989.

⁵³ Yehuda Lukacs, Israel, Jordan, and the peace process, Syracuse university press, 1997, pp191-198.

⁵⁴ Prince Hassan Bin Talal, previous crown prince of Jordan, conference on arms control and regional security, Amman, Jordan 1995.

⁵⁵ That may caused by border disputes in more than 20 places within the Arab countries.

⁵⁶ Such as Osama Bin Laden. See Sami Hajjar, *Ibid* pp19-20.

⁵⁷ Such as Syria, Libya, Iran and Algeria.

⁵⁸ *Robert McNamara said " Poverty is not an easy concept. It is not just lack of wealth, it is a variety of conditions that lead to weakness. Illiteracy, ailment, hunger, and lack of hope dissipate the human's hopes and ambitions, so he would resort to a new force that is violence and extremism".

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Population growth in the Middle East countries is relatively high. The annual growth of Jordan, for example, is 3.7%.

⁶¹ Malcon B. Russell, the Middle East and South Asia 1999, 33RD edition, pp2-7.

⁶² From the regional experiences, Arab-Israeli wars aswell as 2nd Gulf war effected the economies of regional countries, both in direct and indirect ways.

⁶³ These reasons include military, political, cultural, and historical reasons whether between Arabs and Israel or Iraq and Iran.

⁶⁴ The conventional arms include advanced fighter aircraft, armored combat vehicles, artillery, helicopters, and tanks. The unconventional arms as ballistic missiles, chemical weapons, biological weapons, and nuclear in some countries.

⁶⁵ Saudi Arabia has been the premier arms purchaser in the world, Iraq was the second, Iran was the third, Syria was eight, and Egypt was tenth. For more see Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Yearbook 1990: World armament and disarmament, Oxford University Press,1990, p.228.

⁶⁶ After the Gulf War, Foreign Affairs 70, Fall 1991, p. 64.

⁶⁷ Richard Grimmett, Conventional Arms Transfers to the third world,1983-1990, congressional research service report 91-578f, August 1991. For more details on current trends among the major arms exporters to the Middle East, see Natalie Goldring, the 5 arms suppliers and their major recipients,(Defense Budget Project), Washington D.C, September 24, 1991.

⁶⁸ Sami G. Hajjar, Security Implication, Ibid pp6-9.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Alan Platt, arms control in the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli search for peace, edited by Steven Spiegel, university of California institute on global conflict and cooperation, pp 140-142.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ The bilateral and multilateral negotiations between Israel and Arab started after president George Bush's peace initiative of March, 1991, and his proposal for arms control in the region on May 29. See the Arab- Israeli peace process briefing book, Washington, DC: the Washington institute for Near East policy, 1991, Doc.2.1 and Doc. 9.22.

⁷⁴ Ahmed Fakher, "Innovative proposals for arms control in the Middle East" Practical peacemaking in the Middle East, volume 1, arms control and regional security, p.87.

⁷⁵ Michael Nacht, Jay Winik, and Alan Platt, "The Middle East : what about arms control?" Washington post, September 22, 1991, p.C3. 13.

⁷⁶ Papers presented at Washington workshop, on arms control and regional security, Washington, 1992.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ At the meeting in Paris in July 1991, it was agreed that the five permanent members of the UNsecurity council would not transfer weaponry in circumstances which would undermine stability.

⁸⁰ Such as Argentina, Brazil, Germany, India, Italy, and South Africa.

⁸¹ Alan Platt, Ibid pp 144-148.

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